

2024-25 “First Day” TCS Scores Released, REC Price Calculations in Disclosure Forms, Annual Reports and 2023-24 MES Year-End Reports Past Due

July 19, 2024

Coming up in Illinois Shines (Program events & due dates found at the [Vendor Forums & Key Dates webpage](#))

- **Events**
 - July 26, 2024 at 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. CPT. - Illinois Power Agency Power Hour – Long-Term Regional Transmission Planning, State Initiatives, and the Power Grid - Register [here](#)
- **Due Dates**
 - July 24, 2024 – [Stranded Customer REC Adder survey](#) and the [Updating Disclosure Forms for Supply-only Net Metering survey](#) response deadline
 - July 24, 2024 – Part II Verification cut off for July

Stakeholder Support

- **Program Administrator Office Hours** - July 24, 2024 from 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. CPT - Individual AV or Designee support for Program requirements, Portal, application, or other questions. Zoom link: <https://energy-solution.zoom.us/j/95588710302Co>.
- **Application Tips and Tricks** - The Program Administrator publishes [Tips and Tricks](#) to help support stakeholders in avoiding project applications entering *Need Info* status and delaying their review and approval.
 - **GATS Registry - Array and Size Validation:** In coordination with the Generation Attribute Tracking System (“GATS”), the Program Administrator has enhanced their review of the GATS project data against the project application.
 - **Part II review** includes validation of project sizes and array information.
 - AVs are advised to ensure accurate information that is consistent with the application is entered into GATS to avoid a project application resulting in a delay in review and approval.

Program News – New or Updated Items (All Program updates can be found on the [Program Updates webpage](#))

- **Traditional Community Solar (TCS) Scoring Update** - Preliminary scores for all TCS projects submitted during the “first day” application window on June 3, 2024 will be shared individually with each AV today, July 19, 2024. AVs should expect an email directing them to the TCS scoring file located in their AV SharePoint folder, which commences the scoring cure period. Please see the initial, planned scoring schedule below.
 - Application Review Period: Applications undergo initial review by Program Administrator – Approximately 4 weeks (*Complete*)
 - Application Cure Period: Approved Vendors cure deficiencies identified by Program Administrator – Approximately 2 weeks (*Complete*)
 - Application Scoring Period: Program Administrator begins scoring process for all relevant applications (those submitted without deficiencies and those that successfully cure deficiencies during the 2-week cure period) – Approximately 3 weeks (*Complete*)
 - **Scoring Cure Period: AVs are offered a chance to review initial score and dispute and resolve any discrepancies – Approximately 2 weeks (currently July 19 - August 2)**
 - Scores published: AVs wishing to appeal their project score will have two weeks from the receipt of scores to submit an appeal to the Program Administrator
 - Random selection event to ordinally rank projects with tied scores
 - Final scores and project selection published

- **Disclosure Form REC Incentive Calculator Adjustments** - The Illinois Shines Program Portal calculates REC incentive values for Disclosure Forms using applicable REC prices based on the date the Disclosure Form is created. For project applications submitted in the 2024-25 Program Year which commenced June 3, 2024, Disclosure Forms and contracts should reflect calculations using 2024-25 REC Prices (except in select cases where a Disclosure Form submitted after June 3, 2024, correctly applies PY 2023-24 REC prices, such as a reissued Disclosure Form for a project approved and granted capacity in the previous Program Year). On [July 19, 2024, the Program issued an announcement](#) that addressed two issues with the Disclosure Form concerning REC pricing calculation, and corrective actions taken by the Program Administrator and which should be taken by Approved Vendors where necessary. The Program Administrator is available to answer questions and provide assistance to stakeholders in addressing this situation.
- **Clarification of “Interconnecting Utility” and “Contracting Utility”** - The Program Administrator has become aware of some confusion on why projects located in Ameren territory have been contracted to ComEd. [The interconnecting utility and the contracting utility may or may not be the same entity.](#) The interconnecting utility is the utility that issues the interconnection agreement and to whose infrastructure the project system is connected. The contracting utility (also known as the Buyer) is the utility that signs the REC Contract and purchases the RECs delivered by the system. There are only three contracting utilities: ComEd, Ameren, and MidAmerican. A project system may be interconnected to Ameren but contracted with ComEd for REC delivery, or vice versa. The Program Administrator determines which utility will serve as the Buyer for each contract. While a batch may contain projects in multiple utility service territories, the Program Administrator will strive to assign contracts to the utility where the bulk of the projects are located but may not always be able to do so because consideration is made to allow each utility to meet its pro-rata share of the Renewable Portfolio Standards (“RPS”) REC targets and available RPS funding. The REC price for each system will be based on the applicable Group for that system’s physical location, and not based on service area of the contracting utility.
- **AV Project Reassignment Requests** - Please note that only the current AV of a project can submit a request to reassign a project to another AV. Property owners, project owners, and other AVs may not submit a request to reassign a project to another AV.
- **CEJA Workforce Development News** - This week Governor Pritzker [announced](#) the grantees for the CEJA Climate Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program. The Climate Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program provides training opportunities in the trades to expand the clean energy talent pipeline and boost diversity in clean energy trade industries. The program also prioritizes underrepresented populations and residents living in communities that have historically faced economic and environmental barriers. DCEO also awarded several other program administrators for CEJA job training programs and hubs and the [list](#) can be found on DCEO’s [Program Announcements webpage](#). AVs and Designees seeking to add Equity Eligible Persons to their project workforce can use this resource.
- **Annual Reports Past Due** - AVs with an active REC Contract are required to submit an Annual Report pertaining to the contracts and systems in their portfolio during the Annual Report period. Annual Reports were due July 15, and the Annual Report Cure Period began on July 16. The Program Administrator will contact AVs to cure any report discrepancies. Submission of an Annual Report is a Program requirement, and failure to submit an Annual Report is an Event of Default under the REC Contract that puts both the Approved Vendor and its contracted projects in jeopardy of continued participation in the Program.

Key dates relating to Annual Reports:

- October 1, 2024 – Last day for Program to inform AVs of discrepancies on Annual Reports
- October 14, 2024 – Annual Reports are finalized
- November 15, 2024 – Program Administrator Drawdown calculations complete

Annual Report resources are available to AVs at the Program website’s [Help Guides and Application Tips and Frequently Asked Questions](#) pages.

- **Reminder: July 24 Response Deadline for Feedback on REC Adder and Disclosure Form Updates Surveys** - On [July 3, 2024](#), the IPA requested input on the [stranded customer REC adder](#) and on [updating Disclosure Forms for supply-only net metering](#). **While responses to both surveys are optional, feedback from stakeholders is**

incredibly important in informing the Agency's development of the REC adder for taking on stranded customers and an updated approach to Disclosure Form estimates. AVs, Designees, Grassroots Educators, and other stakeholders have first-hand experience working in the Programs and/or working with customers, and the information and perspective this provides cannot be overstated.

- **New to the Program Website** - The following key additions to www.IllinoisShines.com have been shared:
 - [July 12, 2024 Consumer Protection Working Group meeting minutes](#) (Consumer Protection Working Group page)

Program News – Previously Published Items (All Program updates can be found on the [Program Updates webpage](#))

- **General Program**
 - **Project Workforce Definition** - On July 12, 2024, the Program Administrator released an [announcement](#) clarifying the definition of project workforce and questions around the 5% threshold as it relates to compliance with the Minimum Equity Standard.
- **Minimum Equity Standard (“MES”) Reminders**
 - **2024-25 Program Year MES Compliance Plans Past Due** - The 2024-25 Program Year MES Compliance Plans were due on June 3, 2024. **Any Compliance Plans that have not been submitted ARE OVERDUE** and participating entities who did not comply with this Program requirement by June 17 may be subject to disciplinary action. The Program Administrator is currently working to review submitted compliance plans. AVs and Designees can expect to be notified of the Pass/Fail result from their compliance plan within the next four to six weeks. If you have not submitted your MES Compliance Plan, please do so at <https://forms.office.com/r/qvDmuW5Z74>. Resources on the MES and Equity Accountability System can be found here, <https://illinoisshines.com/equity-accountability-system/>, and stakeholders may contact the Program Administrator's MES team at mes@illinoisshines.com for assistance.
 - **2023-24 Program Year MES Year-End Report Past Due** - As noted in previous announcements, Program Year 2023-24 MES Year-End Reports were due July 15, 2024. **Any Year-End Reports that have not been submitted ARE OVERDUE.** The online form can be accessed here: <https://forms.office.com/r/FM6YbtEFWd>. Failure to submit an MES Year-End Report will result in escalation to the Program Administrator's Consumer Protection Team consistent with Sections X.C-D of the Consumer Protection Handbook and may risk future good standing in the Program and result in disciplinary action.
- **Community Solar Program News** - See full [TCS](#) and [CDCS](#) hubs on Program website.
 - **Community-Driven Community Solar (“CDCS”) – Part II Demonstration of Project Commitments and Permissible Changes** - As [previously shared](#), the Program published an announcement providing guidance on CDCS Part II demonstration of project commitments and permissible changes. The announcement provided an overview, a chart of primary and secondary scoring criterion, information that should be submitted in Part II, and next steps after Part II Verification.

Ongoing Operations Updates

- **ComEd Community Solar Portal Outages** - The Program Administrator is aware that the ComEd Community Solar Portal has experienced outages since mid-February 2024, impacting CS subscriber billing and the ability to add/remove subscribers. The Program Administrator is working hard to support AVs impacted by these outages and will provide updates from ComEd as this system comes back to full operating capacity.
- **Part II Verification Cut Off for July** - To allow time for invoice calculation and generation, the last valid Part II Verification date for July will be **July 24, 2024**. Applications that are Part II verified on or before July 24, 2024 will be included in the **August** invoicing period. Application processing will continue throughout the last week of the month and any applications that are reviewed between July 25, 2024 and July 31, 2024 will be invoiced in September 2024.
- **Re-Batching for ICC Meetings** - In advance of each submission of batches to the ICC for approval, AVs are provided the opportunity to withhold or re-batch projects. **AVs must indicate any requests to withdraw or**

withhold projects during the two day re-batching window. In the absence of any action by an AV, the Program Administrator will re-batch the projects at their discretion and submit eligible projects to the ICC.

- It is extremely important that AVs review their re-batching files on SharePoint to indicate any re-batching preferences, but especially requests to withhold projects from submission. The Program Administrator alerts AVs by email when they have projects that are eligible for re-batching and planned to be submitted to the ICC in the next memo. Unfortunately, sometimes these communications are missed, and projects are submitted to the ICC despite an AVs intent to hold a project back.
- The Program Administrator requests that AVs who believe they may want to withhold or re-batch projects mark their calendars and review SharePoint folders for re-batching templates. This way, if any email alerts are missed, AVs are still aware of the dates that re-batching opens and can check if any projects are in the upcoming ICC submission. Below are the next re-batching windows:

Re-Batching Opens for AVs	Election Deadline – 12:00 p.m. CPT (Re-batching closes for AVs)	Trade Date (ICC Meeting Date)
7/29/2024	7/31/2024	8/14/2024
8/13/2024	8/15/2024	8/29/2024
8/26/2024	8/28/2024	9/12/2024
9/10/2024	9/12/2024	9/26/2024
9/24/2024	9/26/2024	10/10/2024
9/30/2024	10/2/2024	10/17/2024
10/15/2024	10/17/2024	10/31/2024
10/21/2024	10/23/2024	11/7/2024
11/1/2024	11/6/2024	11/21/2024

Application Processing Updates

- **Application Processing Update** - Following the start of the 2024-25 Illinois Shines Program Year, the Program Administrator has made substantial progress reviewing waitlist applications. On June 3, the waitlist volume totaled 7,938 Small DG and 208 Large DG applications. Since June 3, over 4,401 Small DG Part I and 201 Large DG Part I previously waitlisted applications have been reviewed. Over 3,741 Small DG Part I and 106 Large DG Part I applications have been verified.

Currently the Program Administrator anticipates completing the review of all previously waitlisted DG applications by the beginning of August. We are currently reviewing applications from early April. Please note that nearly 1,600 applications were received in the first few weeks of that month. Once that very large batch has been processed, the application processors will be able to move quickly through the remainder of the previously waitlisted apps. The Program Administrator expects to be within a two-week turnaround time for review of applications submitted in the 2024–25 Program Year at the end of September for all application categories. This forecast is subject to change, and updates will be provided in each weekly announcement until processing times are back within a normal range.

Ongoing Program Portal Updates

- The latest Portal updates and enhancements, a Portal Development Roadmap, and portal help guides can be found at <https://illinoisshines.com/portal-updates/>.
- **Portal Maintenance and Releases** - Scheduled system maintenance windows continue on **Tuesday and Thursday evenings (from 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. CPT)**, during which times the Portal is typically unavailable to users; the Program hopes these windows are minimally disruptive to Program participants. **Users working in the Portal should save their work prior to the 8:00 p.m. CPT start of system maintenance window, as any**

unsaved information will be lost when the system is moved into maintenance mode. In some cases, Portal availability may resume earlier than 11:00 p.m. CPT, though AVs and Designees should plan on the full three hours.

Requirements and Reminders

- **Stakeholder Feedback** - This table outlines current and forthcoming proposals and feedback requests. Details on previous proposals and feedback requests can be found [at the Program website](#).

Proposal or Feedback Topic and Link to Details	Request for Comment Released	Deadline for Comment	Results or Updates to Request
Survey on the stranded customer REC adder	July 3, 2024	July 24, 2024	See feedback invitation here .
Survey on updating Disclosure Forms for supply-only net metering	July 3, 2024	July 24, 2024	See feedback invitation here .

- **IPA Request for AVs and Installer Designees Interested To Serve Stranded Illinois Shines DG Customers** - As previously [announced](#), the Program seeks entities interested in serving stranded customers, and [updates the lists](#) of participating vendors on a rolling basis. The original announcements include details regarding the opportunity to support stranded customers, eligibility requirements, and anticipated responsibilities.
- **ISEA Webinar: Illinois Shines Distributed Generation Application Guidance** - The Program Administrator has been invited by the Illinois Solar Energy Association to jointly present a webinar to ISEA Business Members on specific application guidance, common mistakes, and tips and tricks when submitting Illinois Shines DG applications, including improving application submissions to avoid *Need Info* requests that delay review. The webinar will be held on **August 1, 2024 from 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. CPT**. For more information and to register via Zoom, please visit <https://www.illinoisolar.org/event-5789788>.
- **Illinois Power Agency Power Hour – Long-Term Regional Transmission Planning, State Initiatives, and the Power Grid - July 26, 2024 at 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. CPT**. This educational webinar will provide an overview on the role of Regional Transmission Organizations in long-term regional transmission planning and current challenges that states are facing on transmission reform. The webinar will also highlight Illinois’ policies and initiatives around transmission planning and policy implementation. The webinar will feature presentations from Mary Yang, Advisor to former Federal Energy Regulatory Commissioner Allison Clements; Jason Stanek, Executive Director of Government Services at PJM; and Brain Granahan, IPA Director. Register at: https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZctd-quqjkuG9GomDX_aG6yr_I0dDt0CS9c#/registration

CONTACT US: For portal, application, or Program-specific questions and inquiries, please contact admin@IllinoisShines.com or call 877-783-1820.